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Chapter No. 391
16/HR26/R240
Eco / Gov

HOUSE BILL NO. 491

Originated in House _____ Clerk

HOUSE BILL NO. 491

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 19-5-353, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO EXTEND THE DATE OF REPEAL ON THE MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATORS; TO AMEND SECTION 19-5-357, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO EXTEND THE DATE OF REPEAL ON THE FUNDING FOR THE TRAINING OF SUCH TELECOMMUNICATORS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. Section 19-5-353, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

19-5-353. (1) The initial minimum standard of training for local public safety and 911 telecommunicators shall be determined by the Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training. All courses approved for minimum standards shall be taught by instructors certified by the course originator as instructors for such courses.

(2) The minimum standards may be changed at any time by the Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training.

(3) Changes in the minimum standards may be made upon request from any bona fide public safety, emergency medical or

fire organization operating within the State of Mississippi. Requests for change shall be in writing submitted to either the State Law Enforcement Training Academy; the State Fire Academy; the Mississippi Chapter of the Associated Public Safety Communications Officers, Incorporated; the Mississippi Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association; the Mississippi State Board of Health, Emergency Medical Services Division; the Mississippi Justice Information Center; the Mississippi Sheriff's Association; the Mississippi Fire Chief's Association; the Mississippi Association of Chiefs of Police; or Mississippians for Emergency Medical Service.

(4) The minimum standards in no way are intended to restrict or limit any additional training which any department or agency may wish to employ, or any state or federal required training, but to serve as a basis or foundation for basic training.

(5) Persons in the employment of any public safety, fire, 911 PSAP or emergency medical agency as a telecommunicator on July 1, 1993, shall have three (3) years to be certified in the minimum standards courses provided they have been employed by such agency for a period of more than one (1) year prior to July 1, 1993.

(6) Persons having been employed by any public safety, fire, 911 PSAP or emergency medical agency as a telecommunicator for less than one (1) year prior to July 1, 1993, shall be required to have completed all the requirements for minimum training standards, as set forth in Sections 19-5-351 through 19-5-361,

within one (1) year from July 1, 1993. Persons certified on or before July 1, 1993, in any course or courses chosen shall be given credit for these courses, provided the courses are still current and such persons can provide a course completion certificate.

(7) Any person hired to perform the duties of a telecommunicator in any public safety, fire, 911 PSAP or emergency medical agency after July 1, 1993, shall complete the minimum training standards as set forth in Sections 19-5-351 through 19-5-361 within twelve (12) months of their employment or within twelve (12) months from the date that the Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training shall become operational.

(8) Professional certificates remain the property of the board, and the board reserves the right to either reprimand the holder of a certificate, suspend a certificate upon conditions imposed by the board, or cancel and recall any certificate when:

(a) The certificate was issued by administrative error;

(b) The certificate was obtained through misrepresentation or fraud;

(c) The holder has been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude;

(d) The holder has been convicted of a felony; or

(e) Other due cause as determined by the board.

When the board believes there is a reasonable basis for either the reprimand, suspension, cancellation of, or recalling the certification of a telecommunicator, notice and opportunity for a hearing shall be provided. Any telecommunicator aggrieved by the findings and order of the board may file an appeal with the chancery court of the county in which such person is employed from the final order of the board. Any telecommunicator whose certification has been cancelled pursuant to Sections 19-5-351 through 19-5-361 may reapply for certification but not sooner than two (2) years after the date on which the order of the board canceling such certification became final.

(9) Any state agency, political subdivision or "for-profit" ambulance, security or fire service company that employs a person as a telecommunicator who does not meet the requirements of Sections 19-5-351 through 19-5-361, or that employs a person whose certificate has been suspended or revoked under provisions of Sections 19-5-351 through 19-5-361, is prohibited from paying the salary of such person, and any person violating this subsection shall be personally liable for making such payment.

(10) These minimum standards and time limitations shall in no way conflict with other state and federal training as may be required to comply with established laws or regulations.

(11) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, * * * 2019.

SECTION 2. Section 19-5-357, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

19-5-357. (1) From and after July 1, 1993, a service charge of Five Cents (5¢) shall be placed on each subscriber service line within the State of Mississippi. This service charge shall apply equally to both private and business lines and shall apply to all service suppliers operating within the State of Mississippi. This subscriber service charge level shall be reviewed periodically to determine if the service charge level is adequate or excessive, and adjustments may be made accordingly.

(2) Every billed service user shall be liable for any service charge imposed under this section until it has been paid to the service supplier. The duty of the service supplier to collect any such service charge shall commence upon the date of its implementation. Any such minimum standards telephone service charge shall be added to, and may be stated separately in, the billing by the service supplier to the service user.

(3) The service supplier shall have no obligation to take any legal action to enforce the collection of any emergency telephone service charge. However, the service supplier shall annually provide the Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training with a list of the amount uncollected, together with the names and addresses of those service users who carry a balance that can be determined by the service supplier to be nonpayment of such service charge. The service charge shall be

collected at the same time as the tariff rate in accordance with the regular billing practice of the service supplier. Good faith compliance by the service supplier with this provision shall constitute a complete defense to any legal action which may result from the service supplier's determination of nonpayment and/or the identification of service users in connection therewith.

(4) The amounts collected by the service supplier attributable to the minimum standards telephone service charge shall be deposited monthly into a special fund hereby created in the State Treasury. The amount of service charge collected each month by the service supplier shall be remitted to the special fund no later than sixty (60) days after the close of the month. A return, in such form as prescribed by the Department of Revenue, shall be filed with the Department of Revenue, together with a remittance of the amount of service charge collected payable to the special fund. The service supplier shall maintain records of the amount of service charge collected for a period of at least three (3) years from date of collection. From the gross receipts to be remitted to the special fund, the service supplier shall be entitled to retain as an administrative fee, an amount equal to one percent (1%) thereof. This service charge is a state fee and is not subject to any sales, use, franchise, income, excise or any other tax, fee or assessment, and shall not be considered revenue of the service supplier for any purpose. All administrative provisions of the Mississippi Sales Tax Law, including those which

fix damages, penalties and interest for nonpayment of taxes and for noncompliance with the provisions of such chapter, and all other duties and requirements imposed upon taxpayers, shall apply to all persons liable for fees under the provisions of this chapter, and the Commissioner of Revenue shall exercise all the power and authority and perform all the duties with respect to taxpayers under this chapter as are provided in the Mississippi Sales Tax Law except where there is a conflict, then the provisions of this chapter shall control.

(5) The proceeds generated by the minimum standards service charge shall primarily be used by the board pursuant to legislative appropriation to fund the minimum standards training program for public safety telecommunicators within the State of Mississippi. These funds shall be applied on a first-come first-served basis, which shall be determined by the date of application. All city, county and state public safety telecommunicators, including those employed by city and/or county supported ambulance services and districts, shall be eligible to receive these funds to meet minimum standards training requirements. No "for-profit" ambulance, security or fire service company operating in the private sector shall be qualified to receive these minimum standards training funds unless the company is on contract with a local government to provide primary emergency response. Law enforcement officers, fire and emergency medical personnel who are used as part-time or "fill-in"

telecommunicators shall also be eligible to receive funding for this minimum standards training, provided they serve at least eight (8) hours per month as a telecommunicator. However, emergency medical personnel who are used as part-time or "fill-in" telecommunicators and are employed by any for-profit ambulance company operating in the private sector shall be eligible to receive funding for the minimum standards training, provided they serve at least twenty (20) hours per week as a telecommunicator. These funds may also be expended by the Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training to administer the minimum standards program for such things as personnel, office equipment, computer software, supplies and other necessary expenses.

(6) The Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training shall be authorized to reimburse any public safety agency or emergency medical service for meals, lodging, travel, course fees and salary during the time spent training, upon successful completion of such course. Funds may also be expended to train certain individuals to become certified instructors of the various courses included in these minimum standards in order to conduct training within the State of Mississippi.

(7) If the proceeds generated by the minimum standards service charge exceed the amount of monies necessary to fund the service, the Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training may authorize such excess funds to be available for

advanced training, upgraded training and recertification of instructors. Any funds remaining at the close of any fiscal year shall not lapse into the State General Fund but shall be carried over to the next fiscal year to be used as a beginning balance for the fiscal requirements of such year.

(8) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, * * * 2019.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2016.

PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
March 1, 2016

Philip Gunn

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PASSED BY THE SENATE
March 28, 2016

Tate Reeves

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR

Phil Bryant

GOVERNOR

April 1, 2016
3:16 pm